Security schemes for handloom and powerloom workers

292. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to implement any special security schemes for the workers in handloom and powerloom sector;

(b) if so, by when these schemes will come into force; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) to (c) The Government of India is already implementing the Weavers' Welfare Scheme with the components of Health Package, Thrift Fund and New Insurance for handloom weavers with the objective of providing health care facilities, social security and coverage against various types of risks such as loss of life, permanent total/partial disability due to accidents, loss or damage to the dwelling units, raw materials, finished products etc. due to natural calamities. The Government of India has also introduced a special contributory insurance scheme for handloom weavers and powerloom workers for providing life insurance cover to the handloom weavers and powerloom workers. The scheme is a combination of Janshree Bima Yojana and Add-on Group Insurance and is implemented in Collaboration with Life Insurance Corporation of India. The scheme covers natural/accidental death, permanent total/partial disability.

Increase in cotton production

293. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that there has been increase in production of cotton but there is no corresponding demand;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to tackle the above situation; and

(c) whether Government have received any representation from States for export of cotton from India?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) The production of cotton during the current cotton year 2004-05

is estimated at 213 lakh bales as compared of 177 lakh bales in the cotton year 2003-04. The total consumption of cotton is also expected to increase from 173.25 lakh bales in 2003-04 to 193 lakh bales in the current cotton year 2004-05. On account of enhanced cotton production, the import of cotton during the current cotton year may witness a marginal decrease to 5 lakh bales from 6.50 lakh bales in the last cotton season. The domestic cotton prices at some places have touched the Minimum Support Price declared by the Government and the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. (CCI) has procured 1, 14,58,571 quintals of kapas (equivalent to lint cotton of 22,23,175 bales of 170 kg each), which is an all time high.

(c) From time to time, representations from various quarters for export of cotton are received. At present export of cotton is free without any quantitative restriction. However, the actual quantum of export depends upon the market forces.

Textiles Mills in North-Eastern Region

294. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of textiles mills proposed to be set up in the States of North-Eastern Region during the current year; and

(b) the details of financial allocation made by government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) The Government does not set up mills in the country. The role of the Government in this regard is that of a facilitator. The Government through various schemes and policies create conducive environment for the growth of the textile mills.

(b) Does not arise.

Financial support for Handloom Sector

295. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that handloom sector is in a declining stage and most of the weavers families are living below poverty line;